

108
Greatest Of All Times



Globally selected
Personalities



23 Jul 1892 <::><::><::> 27 Aug 1975

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23 Jul 1892



27 Aug 1975

Haile Selassie I

{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haile_Selassie}

Haile Selassie I

ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ

[Negusa Nagast](#)



Emperor of Ethiopia

Reign 2 April 1930 – 12 September 1974^[nb 1]

Coronation 2 November 1930

Predecessor [Zewditu](#)

Successor [Amha Selassie](#)


Prime Minister [show](#)
[List of prime ministers](#)


Regent of Ethiopia

Reign 27 September 1916 – 2 April 1930

Predecessor [Tessema Nadew](#)

Monarch [Zewditu](#)

Successor	Kirubel Abraham
Born	Lij Tafari Makonnen (<i>Tāfāri Mākonnān</i>) ልጅ ተፈሪ መኮንን 23 July 1892 Ejersa Goro , Hararghe , Ethiopian Empire
Died	27 August 1975 (aged 83) Jubilee Palace , Addis Ababa , Ethiopia
Burial	5 November 2000 Holy Trinity Cathedral , Addis Ababa , Ethiopia
Spouse	Menen Asfaw (m. 1911)
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crown Prince Asfaw Wossen Prince Makonnen Prince Sahle Selassie Princess Romanework Princess Tenagnework Princess Zenebework Princess Tsehai
Regnal name	ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ (Qädamawi Haylä Səllasé)
House	House of Shewa
Dynasty	Solomonic dynasty
Father	Makonnen Wolde Mikael
Mother	Yeshimebet Ali
Religion	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo
Signature	
Chief Minister	
In office 12 December 1926 – 1 May 1936	
Preceded by	Habte Giyorgis Dinagde
Succeeded by	Wolde Tzaddick
1st and 5th Chairperson of the Organisation of African Unity	
In office 25 May 1963 – 17 July 1964	
Succeeded by	Gamal Abdel Nasser
In office 5 November 1966 – 11 September 1967	
Preceded by	Joseph Arthur Ankrah
Succeeded by	Mobutu Sese Seko

Military career	
Allegiance	 Ethiopian Empire
Years of service	1930–1974
Rank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Marshal • Admiral of the Fleet • Marshal of the Air
Commands	Commander-in-chief

Haile Selassie I ([Ge'ez](#): ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ *Qādamawi Hāylä Śəllase*, lit. 'Power of the [Trinity](#)'; born **Tafari Makonnen**; 23 July 1892 – 27 August 1975) was the [Emperor of Ethiopia](#) from 1930 to 1974. He rose to power as the [Regent Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia](#) (*Enderase*) under Empress [Zewditu](#) between 1916 and 1930. Widely considered to be a defining figure in modern [Ethiopian history](#), he is accorded divine importance in [Rastafari](#), a relatively new [Abrahamic religion](#) that emerged in the [Colony of Jamaica](#) in the 1930s. A few years before he began his reign over the [Ethiopian Empire](#), Selassie defeated Ethiopian army commander [Ras Gugsä Welle Bitul](#), who was the nephew of Empress [Taytu Betul](#), during the [Battle of Anchem](#). He belonged to the [Solomonic dynasty](#), which was founded by Emperor [Yekuno Amlak](#) in 1270; Amlak's successors claimed that he was a lineal descendant of [Menelik I](#), the legendary Emperor of Ethiopia who was supposedly born to [King Solomon](#) and [Queen Makeda](#) of the [Kingdom of Israel](#) and the [Kingdom of Sheba](#), respectively. Modern historians regard the Solomonic lineage claim as an unfounded myth created by [Yekuno Amlak](#) to justify wresting power from the [Zagwe Dynasty](#).

Selassie, seeking to modernise Ethiopia, introduced a series of political and social reforms, including the [1931 constitution](#) and the [abolition of slavery](#). He led the empire during the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#) and was consequently exiled after its defeat in the [United Kingdom](#) after the beginning of the [Italian occupation of East Africa](#). In 1940, he travelled to [Anglo-Egyptian Sudan](#) to assist in coordinating the Ethiopian struggle against [Fascist Italy](#), and was able to return home following the [East African campaign](#) of [World War II](#). He later dissolved the [Federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea](#), which was established by the [United Nations General Assembly](#) in 1950, and annexed [Eritrea](#) as one of [Ethiopia's provinces](#), while also [fighting to prevent Eritrean secession](#).

As an [internationalist](#), Selassie led Ethiopia's accession to the [United Nations](#) as a charter member. In 1963, he presided over the formation of the [Organisation of African Unity](#), the precursor of the [African Union](#), and served as the institution's first chairman. By the early 1960s, many prominent [African socialists](#), such as [Kwame Nkrumah](#), [Ahmed Sékou Touré](#), and [Ahmed Ben Bella](#), envisioned the creation of a "[United States of Africa](#)" to rival the similar concept of a [federal Europe](#). The rhetoric of this faction, especially in light of the then-ongoing [Cold War](#), was overwhelmingly [anti-Western](#), and Selassie saw this as a threat

to the alliance he had so calculably constructed. Therefore, he took it upon himself to attempt to influence a more moderate posture within the group.

Amidst popular uprisings by the country's students, peasants, urban dwellers, merchants, political activists, and marginalised religious and ethnic groups, Selassie was overthrown by the [Derg](#) in the [1974 Ethiopian coup d'état](#). With support from the [Soviet Union](#), the Derg began governing Ethiopia as a [Marxist–Leninist state](#). In 1994, three years after the [fall of the Derg military junta](#), it was revealed to the public that the Derg had assassinated Selassie at the [Jubilee Palace](#) in [Addis Ababa](#) on 27 August 1975. On 5 November 2000, [his excavated remains](#) were buried at the [Holy Trinity Cathedral of Addis Ababa](#).

Among some adherents of [Rastafari](#), Selassie is referred to as the [returned Jesus](#)—that is, the [Messiah](#) and [God incarnate](#). This distinction notwithstanding, he was a [Christian](#) and adhered to the tenets and liturgy of the [Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#). He has been criticised by some historians for his suppression of rebellions among the landed aristocracy (*Mesafint*), which consistently opposed his changes. Some have also criticised Ethiopia's failure to modernise rapidly enough. During his reign, the [Harari people](#) were persecuted and many left the [Harari Region](#). His administration was also criticised by human rights groups, such as [Human Rights Watch](#), as autocratic and illiberal. According to some sources, late into Selassie's administration, the [Oromo language](#) was banned from education, public speaking and use in administration, though there was never an official law or government policy that criminalised any language. His government also relocated many [Amhara people](#) into southern Ethiopia, where they served in government administration, courts, and church. Following the death of Ethiopian civil rights activist [Hachalu Hundessa](#) in 2020, the [Bust of Haile Selassie](#) in the United Kingdom was destroyed by Oromo-speaking protesters, and an equestrian monument depicting his father [Makonnen Wolde Mikael](#) was also removed from [Harar](#).



The conquering [Lion of Judah](#), a title of the Ethiopian emperor and a national symbol of Ethiopia.



Coat of arms of the Emperor of Ethiopia







Imperial Standard of Haile Selassie (Obverse)



Imperial Standard of Haile Selassie (Reverse)

Italian Ethiopia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Ethiopia

Italian Ethiopia Etiopia italiana የኢጣልያ መንግሥት	
1936–1941	
	
Flag	
	
Map of Italian East Africa after Italy's annexation of Ethiopia.	
Status	Part of Italian East Africa
Capital	Addis Ababa
Official languages	Italian
Common languages	Amharic , Afan Oromo , Somali , Tigrinya
History	
Italian Ethiopia proclaimed by Italy	9 May 1936
Declared part of Italian East Africa	1 June 1936
Second Italo-Ethiopian War ends	19 February 1937
Allied liberation	27 November 1941
Currency	Italian East African lira
Preceded by  Ethiopian Empire	Succeeded by Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (Ethiopia) 
Today part of	Ethiopia, Somalia

Italian Ethiopia (*Italian*: *Etiopia italiana*), also known as the **Italian Empire of Ethiopia**, was the territory of the [Ethiopian Empire](#), which Italy occupied for approximately five years. Italian Ethiopia was not an administrative entity, but the formal

name of the former territory of the Ethiopian Empire, which now constituted the Governorates of [Amhara](#), [Harar](#), [Galla-Sidamo](#), and [Scioa](#) after the establishment of [Italian East Africa](#) (*Africa Orientale Italiana*, AOI).

After the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#), in which [Fascist Italy](#) occupied Ethiopia, the Ethiopian territories were proclaimed by [Benito Mussolini](#) as part of [Italian East Africa](#) (AOI) in 1936, with the capital of the AOI being established in [Addis Ababa](#) and [King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy](#) proclaiming himself [Emperor of Ethiopia](#). Fighting between Ethiopian forces and the Italian military continued until February 1937, and subsequent [guerrilla resistance](#) against Italy persisted until 1939.

In 1941, during [World War II](#), Ethiopia was liberated from Italian control by [Allied](#) forces in the [East African campaign](#), but an [Italian guerrilla war](#) continued until 1943. Ethiopia was placed under a [British military administration](#), while Emperor [Haile Selassie](#) returned and reclaimed the Ethiopian throne. The [Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement](#), signed in 1942, confirmed Ethiopia's status as a sovereign state, although some regions of Ethiopia were temporarily placed under British control. In December 1944, a new agreement led to the restoration of full sovereignty to Ethiopia, although the British continued to control the Ogaden until 1955. Under the [peace treaty of 1947](#), Italy recognized the sovereignty and independence of Ethiopia and renounced all claims to special interests or influence in that country. Many [Italian settlers](#) remained for decades after receiving full pardon from Emperor Selassie.

Characteristics

Since 1 June 1936 Italian Ethiopia was part of the newly created [Italian East Africa](#), and was administratively composed of four governorates: [Amhara](#), [Harar](#), [Galla-Sidamo](#) and [Scioa](#). The Scioa Governorate was originally known as the [Addis Abeba Governorate](#), but enlarged in November 1938 with parts of the neighboring governorates of Harar, Galla-Sidamo, and Amhara. Each Governorate was under the authority of an Italian governor, answerable to the [Italian viceroy](#), who represented the Emperor [Victor Emmanuel III](#).

Italian Ethiopia had an area of 790,000 square kilometres (305,000 sq mi) and a population of 9,450,000 inhabitants, resulting in a density of 12 inhabitants per square kilometre (31/sq mi)

Some territories of the defeated Kingdom of Ethiopia were added to Italian Eritrea and Italian Somalia inside the AOI. This was not just since they were mainly populated by Eritreans and Somalis respectively, but also as a reward for their colonial soldiers who fought in the Italian Army against the [Negus](#) troops).

The currency used was the [Italian East African lira](#): the *Lira AOI* were special banknotes of 50 lire and 100 lire circulating in AOI between 1938 and 1941.

The official language was the [Italian language](#), but in the capital region and in [Tigray](#) there was developed a koine language from Italian -according to academics like G. Bernini and L. Mori - between the native population: the Pidgin Italian of Ethiopia





Emperor Haile Selassie
in 1934



Marshal Graziani in 1940



Italian troops in Addis Ababa,
1936



Ethiopians greeting the depiction
of Mussolini at Mekelle



Ras Seyoum Mengesha, Ras
Getachew Abate and Ras Kibbede
Guebret offered support to
Mussolini in February 1937.



Italian-era electric power corporation
building in Addis Ababa

Chronology of Haile Selassie

{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology_of_Haile_Selassie}

**This is a chronology of the lifetime of
Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie
(reigned from 1930 to 1974).**



Haile Selassie in full dress, 1970

1892-1930

- 23 July 1892 – [Haile Selassie](#) (as Ras Tafari) was born from Ras [Mekonnen Woldemikael](#) and Woizero [Yeshimebet Ali](#) Abba Jifar.
- 1 November 1905 – Tafari was renamed as *Dejazmach* at the age of 13.
- 1906 – His father Ras Mikael died at [Kulibi](#).
- 1906 – Tafari assumed nominal governorship of [Selale](#), enabled him to continue his studies.
- 1907 – He was appointed as governor over part of the province of [Sidamo](#).

- 1907 – Following his death of his brother Yelma, the governorate of Harar was left vacant, which left to [Menelik's](#) loyal general [Balcha Safo](#).
- 1910/1911 – Tafari appointed as governor of [Harar](#).
- 3 August 1911 – Tafari married to [Menen Asfaw](#) from [Ambassel](#), the niece of the heir to throne [Lij Iyasu](#).
- 1916 – Empress [Zewditu](#) made Tafari Ras and was made heir apparent and Crown Prince.
- 11 February 1917 – During the coronation of Zewditu, she pledged Regent Tafari to rule fairly.
- 1924 – Ras Tafari toured numerous countries: [Jerusalem](#), [Alexandria](#), [Paris](#), [Luxembourg](#), [Brussels](#), [Amsterdam](#), [Stockholm](#), [London](#), [Geneva](#), and [Athens](#).
- 1928 – When *Dejazmach* Balcha Safo went to [Addis Ababa](#) with considerable size of forces, Tafari consolidated his hold over the provinces, many of Menelik's appointees refused to abide the new regulations.
- 18 February 1928 – As Balcha Safo went to Addis Ababa, Tafari had Ras [Kassa Haile Darge](#) buy off his army and arranged to have him displaced as the shum of Sidamo Province, by [Birru Wolde Gabriel](#) who himself was replaced by [Desta Damtew](#).
- 2 August 1928 – the [Italo-Ethiopian Treaty](#) was signed to foster favorable relations between the two countries.
- 7 October 1928 – Empress Zewditu crowned Tafari as [Negus](#).
- 31 March 1930 – [Gugsa Welle](#) was defeated by loyal forces of Tafari during the [Battle of Anchem](#).
- 2 April 1930 – Death of Zewditu; Tafari rose to power as [Emperor of Ethiopia](#).
- 2 November 1930 – Ras Tafari crowned as Haile Selassie I at Addis Ababa's [St. George's Cathedral](#).

1930-1974

- 16 July 1931 – Emperor Haile Selassie introduced the [first Constitution of Ethiopia](#), providing [bicameral legislature](#).
- 5 December 1934 – the [Italians](#) initially invaded Ethiopia at [Welwel](#), in [Ogaden](#); Haile Selassie armies set up headquarters at [Dessie](#) in [Wollo Province](#).
- 3 October 1935 – the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#) began.
- 19 October 1935 – Haile Selassie gave more precise orders for his army to his Commander-in-Chief Ras Kassa.
- 2 May 1936 – Haile Selassie appointed Ras [Imru Haile Selassie](#) as Prince Regent in his absence, departing with his family for [French Somaliland](#).
- 30 June 1936 – Haile Selassie [appealed to the League of Nations](#) address the invasion.
- 1936–1941 – Haile Selassie lived in [Bath, England](#), in [Fairfield House](#), which he bought.
- 18 January 1941 – during the [East African Campaign](#) in [World War II](#), Haile Selassie crossed the border between Sudan and Ethiopia near the village of Um Idda.
- 5 May 1941 – Haile Selassie entered Addis Ababa and reclaimed his throne after leaving for five years since [Italian occupation](#), and address the Ethiopian populace.
- 27 August 1942 – Haile Selassie abolished [slavery in Ethiopia](#).
- 1942 – Haile Selassie attempted to institute a [progressive tax](#) scheme.
- 2 December 1950 – the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 390 (V), establishing the former [Italian colony](#) into Ethiopia.
- 4 November 1955 – the revised [1955 Constitution of Ethiopia](#) adopted with unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy scheme.
- 1958 – the famine of [Tigray](#) unveiled to Ministry of the Interior two years later, which contributed significant deaths.
- 1959 – Haile Selassie played a role of the autocephaly of the [Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church](#) from [Coptic Orthodox Church](#).

- 13 December 1960 – a [coup d'état was attempted](#) against Haile Selassie during state visiting [Brazil](#) despite successfully suppressed by his loyal [Kebur Zabagna](#) army.
- 2 December 1950 – The federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia had stipulated under UN Resolution 390 (V).
- 1961 – [Eritrean War of Independence](#) began, followed by the dissolution of the federation and closing of Eritrean parliament.
- 25 May 1963 – Haile Selassie formed the [Organization of African Unity](#) (OAU) headquartered in Addis Ababa.
- 1964 – Haile Selassie would initiate the concept of the [United States of Africa](#), a proposition later taken up by [Muammar Gaddafi](#).
- 1966 – Haile Selassie attempted to replace the historical tax system with a single progressive income tax, which weakened the nobility which previously avoided to pay taxes.
- 1960s – 1970s – Students [Marxism](#) revolution took place among educated people with radical and left-wing sentiments to oppose Haile Selassie feudal administration.
- 1972 – 1974 – the Wollo–Tigray famine killed about 40,000 to 80,000 Ethiopians. Haile Selassie was criticized for not reporting these famines.
- 12 January 1974 – the [Ethiopian Revolution](#) began when Ethiopian soldiers began rebellion in [Negele Borena](#).
- 27 February 1974 – [Prime Minister Aklilu Habte-Wold](#) resigned as a result from mutiny. He installed the liberal aristocrat [Endelkachew Mekonnen](#) as a new Prime Minister.
- June 1974 – The Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, also known as the [Derg](#) formed to topple Haile Selassie government.
- 12 September 1974 – Haile Selassie was [deposed](#) by the Derg's General [Aman Andom](#) at the age of 82. He was subsequently imprisoned at [National Palace](#) in Addis Ababa.
- 27 August 1975 – Haile Selassie died and pronounced on state media one day later on 28 August from "respiratory failure" following complications from prostate examination followed up by a prostate operation.
- 17 February 1992 – After the [fall of the Derg](#) in 1991, Haile Selassie's bones were [found](#) under a concrete slab on the palace grounds.
- 5 November 2000 – State funeral of Haile Selassie took place at [Holy Trinity Cathedral](#) in Addis Ababa.

(☺) ~~~~~(☺)

Ethiopian Empire

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_Empire

The **Ethiopian Empire**, historically known as **Abyssinia** or simply **Ethiopia**,^[b] was a sovereign state that encompassed the present-day territories of [Ethiopia](#) and [Eritrea](#). It existed from the establishment of the [Solomonic dynasty](#) by [Yekuno Amlak](#) around 1270 until the [1974 coup d'état](#) by the [Derg](#), which ended the reign of the final Emperor, [Haile Selassie](#). In the late 19th century, under Emperor [Menelik II](#), the [empire expanded significantly](#) to the south, and in 1952, [Eritrea was federated](#) under Selassie's rule. Despite being surrounded by hostile forces throughout much of its history, the empire maintained a kingdom centered on its [ancient Christian heritage](#).

Ethiopian Empire

መንግሥተ ኢትዮጵያ ([Ge'ez](#))

Mängəštä 'Ityoppya

የኢትዮጵያ ንጉሠ ነገሥት መንግሥት ([Amharic](#))

Yä 'ityoppya Nāgusä Nāgäst Mängəšt

1270–1974

1936–1941: [Government-in-exile](#)



Top: [State Flag](#)

Bottom: [Civil Flag](#)



[Coat of arms](#)

Motto: ኢትዮጵያ ታቦፅዕ እደዋሃ ንበ እግዚአብሔር

Ityopia tabetsih edewiha ḥabe Igziabiher

(English: "[Ethiopia Stretches Her Hands unto God](#)")

([Psalm 68:31](#))

Anthem:

ኢትዮጵያ ሆይ ደስ ይበልሽ

Ityōpya hoy des ybelish

(English: "[Ethiopia, Be happy](#)")




The Ethiopian Empire boundaries in 1952



The location of the Ethiopian Empire during the reign of [Yohannes IV](#) (dark orange) compared with modern day Ethiopia (orange)

Capital	<i>None</i> ^[note 1] (1270–1635) Gondar (1635–1855) Debre Tabor (1855–1881) Mekelle (1881–1889) Addis Ababa (1889–1974)
Common languages	Amharic (dynastic, official, court) Ge'ez (liturgical language, literature) many others
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State religions: • Christianity • —Orthodox Tewahedo Church (1270–1622 and 1632–1974) • —Catholic Church (1622–1632) • Unofficial: • P'ent'ay Evangelicalism • Sunni Islam • Judaism • Traditional African religions
Demonym(s)	Endonym: Ethiopian Exonym: Abyssinian
Government	Absolute monarchy (1270–1931) Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy (1931–1974)
Emperor	
1270–1285 (first)	Yekuno Amlak
1930–1974 (last)	Haile Selassie
Prime Minister	
1909–1927 (first)	Habte Giyorgis
1974 (last)	Mikael Imru
Legislature	None (rule by decree) (until 1931) Parliament (1931–1974)
Upper house	Senate (1931–1974)
Lower house	Chamber of Deputies (1931–1974)
Historical era	Middle Ages to Cold War
Ascension of Yekuno Amlak	1270
Conquests of Amda Seyon I	1314–1344

Ethiopian–Adal War	1529–1543
Gondarine period	1632–1769
Zemene Mesafint	1769–1855
Menelik II's conquests	1878–1904
First Italo-Ethiopian War	1895–1896
Constitution adopted	16 July 1931
Second Italo-Ethiopian War (annexed into Italian East Africa)	3 October 1935
Sovereignty restored	5 May 1941
Federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea	11 September 1952
Coup d'état by the Derg	12 September 1974
Monarchy abolished	21 March 1975
Area	
1954	1,221,900 km ² (471,800 sq mi)
Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold tax • Salt blocks (Amoleh) • Dinar • Maria Theresa thaler (c. 18th–19th century) • Ethiopian birr, thaler, or dollar (from 1894)
<div> <div> Preceded by Zagwe dynasty </div> <div> Succeeded by Derg  </div> </div>	

Founded in 1270 by [Yekuno Amlak](#), who claimed to descend from the last [Aksumite](#) king and ultimately King [Solomon](#) and the [Queen of Sheba](#), it replaced the [Agaw kingdom of the Zagwe](#). While initially a rather small and politically unstable entity, the Empire managed to expand significantly under the [crusades](#) of [Amda Seyon I](#) (1314–1344) and [Dawit I](#) (1382–1413), temporarily becoming the dominant force in the [Horn of Africa](#). The Ethiopian Empire would reach its peak during the long reign of Emperor [Zara Yaqob](#) (1434–1468). He consolidated the conquests of his predecessors, built numerous churches and monasteries, encouraged literature and art, centralized imperial authority by substituting regional warlords with administrative officials, and significantly expanded his hegemony over adjacent Islamic territories.

The neighboring Muslim [Adal Sultanate](#) began to threaten the empire by repeatedly attempting to invade it, finally succeeding under [Imam Mahfuz](#). Mahfuz's ambush and defeat by Emperor [Lebna Dengel](#) brought about the early 16th-century [jihad](#) of the Ottoman-supported Adalite Imam [Ahmed Gran](#), who was [defeated in 1543](#) with the help of the [Portuguese](#). Greatly weakened, much of the Empire's southern territory and vassals were lost due to the [Oromo migrations](#). In the north, in what is now Eritrea, Ethiopia managed to repulse [Ottoman invasion](#) attempts, although losing its access to the [Red Sea](#) to them. Reacting to these challenges, in the 1630s Emperor [Fasilides](#) founded the new capital of [Gondar](#), marking the start of a new golden age known as the [Gondarine period](#). It saw relative peace, the successful integration of the Oromo and a flourishing of culture. With the deaths of Emperor [Iyasu II](#) (1755) and [Iyoas I](#) (1769) the realm eventually entered a period of decentralization, known as the [Zemene Mesafint](#) where regional warlords fought for power, with the emperor being a mere puppet.

Emperor [Tewodros II](#) (r. 1855–1868) put an end to the [Zemene Mesafint](#), reunified the Empire and led it into the modern period before dying during the [British Expedition to Abyssinia](#). His successor [Yohannes IV](#) engaged primarily in war and successfully fought [the Egyptians](#) and [Mahdists](#) before dying against the latter in 1889. Emperor [Menelik II](#), now residing in [Addis Ababa](#), subjugated many peoples and kingdoms in what is now western, southern, and eastern Ethiopia, like [Kaffa](#), [Welayta](#), [Harar](#), and other kingdoms. Thus, by 1898 Ethiopia expanded into its modern territorial boundaries. In the northern region, he confronted [Italy's](#) expansion. Through a resounding victory over the Italians at the [Battle of Adwa](#) in 1896, utilizing modern imported weaponry, Menelik ensured Ethiopia's independence and [confined Italy to Eritrea](#).

Later, after the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#), Benito Mussolini's [Italian Empire](#) occupied Ethiopia and established [Italian East Africa](#), merging it with neighboring [Eritrea](#) and the [Italian Somaliland](#) colonies to the south-east. During [World War II](#), the Italians were driven out of Ethiopia with the help of the British army. The Emperor returned from exile and the country became one of the founding members of the [United Nations](#). However, the [1973 Wollo famine](#) and domestic discontent led to the fall of the Empire in 1974 and the rise of the [Derg](#).

History

Background

After the fall of the [Kingdom of Aksum](#) in the 10th century AD, the Ethiopian Highlands would fall under the rule of the [Zagwe Dynasty](#). The new rulers were [Agaws](#) that had come from the [Lasta](#) region, later ecclesiastical texts accused this dynasty of not having pure "Solomonic" stock and derided their achievements. Even at the zenith of their power, most Christians would consider them to be usurpers. However, the architecture of the Zagwe shows a connotation of earlier Aksumite traditions, among those can be seen in [Lalibela](#), the building of rock hewn churches first appeared in the late Aksumite era and reached its peak under the Zagwe.

The Zagwe were not able to stop squabbling over the throne, diverting men, energy and resources that could have been used to affirm the dynasty's authority. By the late 13th century, a young [Amhara](#) nobleman named [Yekuno Amlak](#) rose to power in [Bete Amhara](#). He was strongly supported by the Orthodox Church as he promised to make the church a semi independent institution, he had also enjoyed support from the neighboring Muslim [Makhzumi dynasty](#). Yekuno Amlak then rebelled against the Zagwe king and defeated him at the [Battle of Ansata](#). [Tadesse Tamrat](#) argued that this king was [Yetbarak](#), but due to a local form of [damnatio memoriae](#), his name was removed from the official records. A more recent chronicler of [Wollo](#) history, Getatchew Mekonnen Hasen, states that the last Zagwe king deposed by Yekuno Amlak was [Na'akueto La'ab](#).

Early Solomonic Period

[Yekuno Amlak](#) would rise to the throne by 1270 AD. He was allegedly a descendant of the last king of [Aksum](#), [Dil Na'od](#), and hence the royal kings of Aksum. Through the Aksumite royal lineage, it was also claimed that Yekuno Amlak was a descendant of the biblical king [Solomon](#). The canonical form of the claim was set out in legends recorded in the [Kebra Nagast](#), a 14th century text. According to this, the [Queen of Sheba](#), who supposedly came from Aksum, visited [Jerusalem](#) where she conceived a son with King Solomon. On her return to her homeland of Ethiopia, she gave birth to the child, [Menelik I](#). He and his descendants (which included the Aksumite royal house) ruled Ethiopia until overthrown by the Zagwe usurpers. Yekuno Amlak, as a supposed direct descendant of Menelik I, was therefore claimed to have "restored" the Solomonic line.

Throughout [Yekuno Amlak](#)'s reign he would enjoy friendly relations with the Muslims. He not only had established close ties with the neighboring [Makhzumi dynasty](#) but had also made contact with the [Rasulids](#) in Yemen and the Egyptian [Mamluk Sultanate](#). In a letter sent to the Mamluke Sultan [Baybars](#), he would state his intention of friendly cooperation with the Muslims of Arabia, and described himself as being a protector of all Muslims in Abyssinia. A devout Christian, he would order the construction of the church of Genneta Maryam, commemorating his work with an inscription that reads, "By the grace of God, I king Yekuno Amlak, after I had come to the throne by the will of God, built this church."

In 1285 Yekuno Amlak was succeeded by his son [Yagbe'u Seyon](#), who wrote a letter the Mamluke Sultan, [Qalawun](#) asking him to allow the patriarch of Alexandria to send an [abuna](#) or [metropolitan](#) for the [Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#), but also protesting the Sultan's treatment of his Christian subjects in Egypt, stating that he was a protector of his own Muslim subjects in Ethiopia.^[33] Towards the end of his reign, Yagbe'u refused to appoint one of his sons to be his successors and instead decreed that each of them should rule for one year, he was succeeded by his sons in 1294 but this agreement immediately broke down, by 1299 one of his sons [Wedem Arad](#) seized the throne. Wedem Arad seems to have been in conflict with the neighbouring [Sultanate of Ifat](#) who were trying to expand in eastern [Shewa](#).^[34]

Amda Seyon's Conquests

[Wedem Arad](#) was succeeded by his son, [Amda Seyon I](#), whose reign witnessed the composition of a very detailed and seemingly accurate account of the monarch's various campaigns against his Muslim enemies. This was the first of a series of royal chronicles which were written for the Ethiopian Emperors until modern times. These royal chronicles provided an unbroken chronological record of the entire medieval period in the [Horn of Africa](#). A no less important work produced during his reign was the [Fetha Nagast](#) or "Law of the Kings," which served as the country's legal code. Largely based on biblical principles, it codified the legal and social ideas of the time and remained in use until the early 20th century.

The warlike emperor of [Amda Seyon I](#) conducted many campaigns in [Gojjam](#), [Damot](#) and [Eritrea](#), but his most important campaigns were against his Muslim enemies to the east, which shifted the balance of power in favour of the Christians for the next two centuries. Around 1320, Sultan an-Nasir Muhammad of the Mamluk Sultanate based in Cairo began persecuting Copts and destroying their churches. Amda Seyon then threatened to divert the flow of the Nile if the sultan did not stop his persecution. [Haqq ad-Din I](#), sultan of Ifat, seized and imprisoned an Ethiopian envoy on his way back from [Cairo](#). Amda Seyon responded by invading the [Sultanate of Ifat](#), killing the sultan, sacking the capital and ravaging the Muslim territories, taking livestock, killing many inhabitants, destroying towns and mosques, and taking slaves.

The Ifat sultan was succeeded by [Sabr ad-Din I](#) who rallied the Muslims and waged a rebellion against the Ethiopian occupation. Amda Seyon responded by launching another campaign against his Muslim adversaries to the east, killing the Sultan and campaigning as far as [Adal](#), [Dawaro](#) and [Bali](#) in present day eastern Ethiopia. Amda Seyon's conquests significantly expanded the territory of the Ethiopian Empire, more than doubling it by size and establishing complete hegemony over the region. Relations between the Muslims of the Horn and the Ethiopian Empire seems to have broken down completely around this era, with the chronicler referring to the Muslims in the east and along the coast as "liars, hyenas, dogs, children of evil who deny the son of Christ."

Following Amda Seyon's campaigns to the east. Most of the Muslims in the Horn would become tributaries to the Ethiopian Empire, among them being the [Ifat Sultanate](#). Amda Seyon was succeeded by his son [Newaya Krestos](#) in 1344. Newaya Krestos would put

down several Muslim revolts in [Adal](#) and [Mora](#). Towards the end of his reign he aggressively helped the [Patriarch of Alexandria Mark IV](#), who had been imprisoned by [As-Salih Salih](#), the [Sultan of Egypt](#). One step Newaya Krestos took was to imprison the Egyptian merchants in his kingdom, the Sultan was forced to back down.

In 1382, [Dawit I](#) succeeded the son of Newaya Krestos, [Newaya Maryam](#), as Emperor of Ethiopia. The tributary state of the [Ifat Sultanate](#) had begun to resist Ethiopian hegemony and assert their independence under Sultan [Sa'ad ad-Din II](#). Sultan Sa'ad ad-Din would then raid the Ethiopian frontier provinces capturing much loot and slaves, this resulted in Emperor [Dawit I](#) declaring all the Muslims of the surrounding region to be "enemies of the Lord" and invading the [Ifat Sultanate](#). After a battle between Sa'ad ad-Din and the Emperor, in which the Ifat army was defeated and "no less than 400 elders, each of whom carried an iron bar as his insignia of office" were killed, Sa'ad ad-Din with his remaining supporters were chased to as far as [Zeila](#) on the coast of [Somaliland](#). There, the Ethiopian army besieged Zeila, finally capturing the city and killing Sultan Sa'ad ad-Din, ending the [Ifat Sultanate](#). After Sa'ad ad-Din's death "the strength of the Muslims was abated", as Egyptian historian [al-Maqrizi](#) states, and then the [Amhara](#) settled in the Muslim territories "and from the ravaged mosques and they made churches". The followers of Islam were said to have been harassed for over twenty years.^[39] Following this victory, Ethiopian power would reach its zenith and this era would become legendary as a golden age of peace and stability for the Ethiopian Empire.

However, the remaining [Walashma](#) returned from their exile in 1415 and established the [Adal Sultanate](#) centred around the [Harar](#) region. The Muslims then began to harass Christian held territories in the east prompting Emperor [Yeshaq I](#) to dedicate much of his time to defending his eastern peripheral territories, he seems to have employed several Egyptian Christian advisors to drill his army and teach them how to make Greek fire. These advances were not enough to keep the Muslims at bay and Emperor Yeshaq was soon killed fighting the Adalites in 1429. Yeshaq's death was followed by several years of dynastic confusion during which 5 emperors succeeded each other in 5 years. However in 1434, [Zara Yaqob](#) of Ethiopia would establish himself on the throne.

During his first years on the throne, [Zara Yaqob](#) launched a strong campaign against survivals of pagan worship and "un-Christian practices" within the church. He also took measures to greatly centralize the administration of the country, bringing regions under much tighter imperial control. After hearing about the demolition of the Egyptian Debre Mitmaq monastery, he ordered a period of national mourning and built a church of the same name in [Tegulet](#). He then sent envoys to Egyptian Sultan, [Sayf ad-Din Jaqmaq](#) strongly protesting against the persecution of Egyptian Copts and threaten to divert the flow of the Nile. The Sultan would then encourage the [Adal Sultanate](#) to invade the province of [Dawaro](#) to distract the Emperor, however this invasion was repulsed by the Emperor at the [Battle of Gomit](#). The Egyptian sultan then had the Patriarch of Alexandria severely beaten and threaten to execute him, Emperor [Zara Yaqob](#) decided to back down and did not move in to Adal territory. Zara Yaqob persecuted many idolaters who admitted to worshipping pagan gods, these idolaters were decapitated in public. [Zara Yaqob](#) later founded [Debre Berhan](#) after seeing a [miraculous](#) light that in the sky. Believing this was a sign from [God](#) showing his approval for his persecution of pagans, the emperor ordered a church built on the site, and later constructed an extensive palace nearby, and a second church, dedicated to [Saint Cyriacus](#).

[Zara Yaqob](#) was succeeded by [Baeda Maryam I](#). Emperor Baeda Maryam would give the title of the Queen Mother to [Eleni of Ethiopia](#), one of his father's wives. She was proved to be an effective member of the royal family, and [Paul B. Henze](#) comments that she "was practically co-monarch" during his reign. After the death of Baeda Maryam in 1478 he was succeeded by his 7 year old son [Eskender](#), to whom [Eleni](#) would serve as his regent. She would attempt to establish peace with the Adal Sultan [Muhammad](#), but could not

prevent the Emir of [Harar](#), [Mahfuz](#) from making raids into Ethiopian territory. When [Eskender](#) was of age, he invaded Adal and sacked its capital, [Dakkar](#) but was killed in an ambush returning home. His successor, Emperor [Na'od](#) was eventually killed defending Ethiopian territory from Adalite raids. In 1517 [Mahfuz](#) invaded the Ethiopian province of [Fatager](#), but was killed and ambushed by Emperor [Dawit II](#) (Lebna Dengel). His chronicles state that the Muslim threat was finished and the Emperor return to the highlands as a hero.

Adal Sultanate Invasion

In 1527 a young imam by the name of [Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi](#) would rise to power in Adal after years of internal strife. The Adal Sultanate would stockpile on imported firearms, cannons and other advanced weaponry from Arabia and the [Ottoman Empire](#). He invaded Ethiopia in 1529 and inflicted a heavy defeat on Emperor [Dawit II](#), but later withdrew. He returned two years later to begin a definite invasion of the empire, burning churches, forcibly converting Christians and massacring the inhabitants. According to the chroniclers everywhere he went his men "slew every adult Christian they found, and carried off the youths and the maidens and sold them as slaves." By the mid 1530s most of Ethiopia was under Adalite occupation and Lebna Dengel fled from mountain fortress to mountain fortress until he finally died of natural causes in [Debre Damo](#).

The Emperor was succeeded by his 18 year old son, [Gelawdewos](#), who faced a desperate situation but rallied his soldiers and people to resist the Muslim invasion. By 1540 Gelawdewos led a small force of around 70 men resisting in the highlands of [Shewa](#). However, in 1541 four hundred well armed Portuguese musketeers had arrived in [Massawa](#) where they were reinforced by small contingents of Ethiopian warriors, this modest force made their way across [Tigray](#) where they would defeat much larger contingents of Adalite men. Alarmed by the success of the Portuguese, Gragn would send a petition to the [Ottoman Empire](#) and would receive 2,900 musket armed reinforcements. Together with his Turkish allies Gragn would attack the Portuguese camp at [Wofla](#) killing 200 of their rank and file including their commander, [Cristóvão da Gama](#).

After the catastrophe at Wofla, the surviving Portuguese were able to meet up with [Gelawdewos](#) and his army in the [Semien Mountains](#). The Emperor did not hesitate to take the offensive and won a major victory at the [Battle of Wayna Daga](#) when the fate of Abyssinia was decided by the death of the Imam and the flight of his army. The invasion force collapsed and all the Abyssinians who had been cowed by the invaders returned to their former allegiance, the reconquest of Christian territories proceeded without encountering any effective opposition.

In 1559 Gelawdewos was killed attempting to invade [Adal Sultanate](#) at the [Battle of Fatagar](#), and his severed head was paraded in Adal's capital [Harar](#).

Early modern period

The [Ottoman Empire](#) occupied parts of Ethiopia, from 1557, establishing [Habesh Eyalet](#), the province of Abyssinia, by conquering [Massawa](#), the Empire's main port and seizing [Suakin](#) from the allied [Funj Sultanate](#) in what is now [Sudan](#). In 1573 the [Adal Sultanate](#) attempted to invade Ethiopia again however Sarsa Dengel successfully defended the Ethiopian frontier at the [Battle of Webi River](#).

The Ottomans were checked by [Emperor Sarsa Dengel's](#) victory and sacking of [Argigo](#) in 1589, thus containing them on a narrow coastline strip. The Afar Sultanate maintained the remaining Ethiopian port on the Red Sea, at [Baylul](#).^[50] [Oromo migrations](#) through the same period, occurred with the movement of a large pastoral population from the southeastern provinces of the Empire. A contemporary account was recorded by the monk [Abba Bahrey](#), from the Gamo region. Subsequently, the empire organization

changed progressively, with faraway provinces taking more independence. A remote province such as [Bale](#) is last recorded paying tribute to the imperial throne during [Yagob](#) reign (1590–1607).

In 1636, Emperor [Fasilides](#) founded [Gondar](#) as a permanent capital, which became a highly stable, prosperous commercial center. This period saw profound achievements in [Ethiopian art](#), [architecture](#), and innovations such as the construction of the royal complex [Fasil Ghebbi](#), and 44 churches that were established around [Lake Tana](#). In the arts, the Gondarine period saw the creation of [diptychs](#) and [triptychs](#), [murals](#) and [illuminated manuscripts](#), mostly with religious motifs. The reign of [Iyasu the Great](#) (1682-1706) was a major period of consolidation. It also saw the dispatching of embassies to [Louis XIV's France](#) and to [Dutch India](#). The Early Modern period was one of intense cultural and artistic creation. Notable philosophers from that area are [Zera Yacob](#) and [Walda Heywat](#). After the death of Iyasu I the empire fell into a period of political turmoil.

Modern era

From 1769 to 1855, the Ethiopian empire passed through a period known as the *Princes Era* (in Amharic: *Zemene Mesafint*). This was a period of Ethiopian history with numerous conflicts between the various [Ras](#) (equivalent to the English [dukes](#)) and the Emperor, who had only limited power and only dominated the area around the contemporary capital of [Gondar](#). Both the development of society and culture stagnated in this period. Religious conflict, both within the [Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#) and between them and the Muslims were often used as a pretext for mutual strife. The Princes Era ended with the reign of Emperor [Tewodros II](#).

In 1868, following the imprisonment of several [missionaries](#) and representatives of the [British](#) government, the British engaged in the punitive [Expedition to Abyssinia](#) against Emperor Tewodros. With the backing of most nobles in Ethiopia, the campaign was a success for Britain and the Ethiopian Emperor committed suicide rather than surrender.

From 1874 to 1876, the Empire expanded into [Eritrea](#), under [Yohannes IV](#) King of [Tembien](#), whose forces led by [Ras Alula](#) won the [Ethiopian-Egyptian War](#), decisively beating the Egyptian forces at the [Battle of Gundet](#), in [Hamasién](#). In 1887 Menelik king of [Shewa](#) invaded the [Emirate of Harar](#) after his victory at the [Battle of Chelengo](#).^[6] In 1889 Menelik's general [Gobana Dacche](#) also defeated the [Hadiya](#) leader [Hassan Enjamo](#) and annexed [Hadiya](#) territory.

The 1880s were marked by the [Scramble for Africa](#). Italy, seeking a [colonial presence](#) in Africa, was awarded Eritrea by Britain which led to the [Italo-Ethiopian War of 1887–1889](#) and the scramble for Eritrea's coastal regions between King Yohannes IV of Tembien and Italy. After the death of Emperor Yohannes IV, Italy signed a [treaty](#) with [Shewa](#) (an autonomous kingdom within the empire), creating the protectorate of Abyssinia.

Due to significant differences between the Italian and [Amharic](#) translations of the treaty, Italy believed they had subsumed Ethiopia as a [protectorate](#), while [Menelik II](#) of Shewa repudiated the protectorate status in 1893. Insulted, Italy declared war on Ethiopia in 1895. The [First Italo-Ethiopian War](#) resulted in the 1896 [Battle of Adwa](#), in which Italy was decisively defeated by the numerically superior Ethiopians. As a result, the [Treaty of Addis Ababa](#) was signed in October, which strictly delineated the borders of Eritrea and forced Italy to recognize the independence of Ethiopia. Due to the Entoto Reforms, which provided the Ethiopian Military with modern rifles, many Italian Commanders expressed

shock when seeing that some Ethiopians had more advanced rifles than the average Italian Infantryman.

Beginning in the 1890s, under the reign of the [Emperor Menelik II](#), the empire's forces set off from the central province of [Shewa](#) to incorporate through conquest inhabited lands to the west, east and south of its realm.^[55] The territories that were annexed included those of the western Oromo (non-Shoan Oromo), Sidama, Gurage, Wolayta,^[56] and Dizi.^[57] Among the imperial troops was [Ras Gobena](#)'s Shewan Oromo militia. Many of the lands that they annexed had never been under the empire's rule, with the newly incorporated territories resulting in the modern borders of Ethiopia.

Delegations from the United Kingdom and [France](#) – European powers whose colonial possessions lay next to Ethiopia – soon arrived in the Ethiopian capital to negotiate their own treaties with this newly-proven power.

Italian invasion and World War II

In 1935 Italian soldiers, commanded by [Marshal Emilio De Bono](#), invaded Ethiopia in what is known as the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#). The war lasted seven months before an Italian victory was declared. The Ethiopian Empire was occupied into the Italian colony of [Italian East Africa](#). The invasion was condemned by the [League of Nations](#), though not much was done to end the hostility.

During the conflict, both Ethiopian and Italian troops committed war crimes. Ethiopian troops are known to have made use of [Dum-Dum bullets](#) (in violation of the [Hague Conventions](#)) and mutilated captured soldiers (often with castration).^[58] Italian troops used [sulfur mustard](#) in [chemical warfare](#), ignoring the [Geneva Protocol](#) that it had signed seven years earlier. The Italian military dropped mustard gas in bombs, sprayed it from airplanes and spread it in powdered form on the ground. 150,000 chemical casualties were reported, mostly from mustard gas. In the aftermath of the war Italy annexed Ethiopia, uniting it with Italy's other colonies in eastern Africa to form the new colony of Italian East Africa, and [Victor Emmanuel III of Italy](#) adopted the title "Emperor of [Abyssinia](#)".

On 10 June 1940, Italy declared war on the United Kingdom and France, as France was in the process of being conquered by [Nazi Germany](#) at the time and [Benito Mussolini](#) wished to expand Italy's colonial holdings. The [Italian conquest of British Somaliland](#) in August 1940 was successful, but the war turned against Italy afterward. [Haile Selassie](#) returned to Ethiopia from England to help rally the resistance. The British began [their own invasion in January 1941](#) with the help of Ethiopian freedom fighters, and the last organized Italian resistance in Italian East Africa surrendered in November 1941, ending Italian rule.

Post War Ethiopia

On 27 August 1942, [Haile Selassie](#) abolished the legal basis of [slavery](#) throughout the empire and imposed severe penalties, including death, for slave trading.^[60] After World War II, Ethiopia became a [charter member](#) of the United Nations. In 1948, the [Ogaden](#), a region disputed with [Somalia](#), was granted to Ethiopia.^[61] On 2 December 1950, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 390 (V), establishing the federation of [Eritrea](#) (the former Italian colony) into Ethiopia. Eritrea was to have its own constitution, which would provide for ethnic, linguistic, and cultural balance, while Ethiopia was to manage its finances, defense, and foreign policy.

Despite his centralization policies that had been made before World War II, [Haile Selassie](#) still found himself unable to push for all the programs he wanted. In 1942, he attempted to institute a progressive tax scheme, but this failed due to opposition from the

nobility, and only a flat tax was passed; in 1951, he agreed to reduce this as well.^[63] Ethiopia was still "semi-feudal", and the emperor's attempts to alter its social and economic form by reforming its modes of taxation met with resistance from the nobility and clergy, which were eager to resume their privileges in the postwar era. Where Haile Selassie actually did succeed in effecting new land taxes, the burdens were often passed by the landowners to the peasants. Despite his wishes, the tax burden remained primarily on the peasants.

Between 1941 and 1959, Haile Selassie worked to establish the [autocephaly](#) of the [Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#).^[65] The Ethiopian Orthodox Church had been headed by the [abuna](#), a bishop who answered to the Patriarchate in Egypt. Haile Selassie applied to Egypt's [Holy Synod](#) in 1942 and 1945 to establish the independence of Ethiopian bishops, and when his appeals were denied he threatened to sever relations with the [See of St. Mark](#). Finally, in 1959, [Pope Kyrillos VI](#) elevated the Abuna to Patriarch-Catholicos. The Ethiopian Church remained affiliated with the Alexandrian Church. In addition to these efforts, Haile Selassie changed the Ethiopian church-state relationship by introducing taxation of church lands, and by restricting the legal privileges of the clergy, who had formerly been tried in their own courts for civil offenses.

During the celebrations of his Silver Jubilee in November 1955, Haile Selassie introduced a [revised constitution](#), whereby he retained effective power, while extending political participation to the people by allowing the lower house of parliament to become an elected body. Party politics were not provided for. Modern educational methods were more widely spread throughout the Empire, and the country embarked on a development scheme and plans for modernization, tempered by Ethiopian traditions, and within the framework of the ancient monarchical structure of the state. Haile Selassie compromised when practical with the traditionalists in the nobility and church. He also tried to improve relations between the state and ethnic groups, and granted autonomy to [Afar](#) lands that were difficult to control. Still, his reforms to end feudalism were slow and weakened by the compromises he made with the entrenched aristocracy. The Revised Constitution of 1955 has been criticized for reasserting "the indisputable power of the monarch" and maintaining the relative powerlessness of the peasants.

On 13 December 1960, while Haile Selassie was on a state visit to [Brazil](#), his Imperial Guard forces staged [an unsuccessful coup](#), briefly proclaiming Haile Selassie's eldest son [Asfa Wossen](#) as emperor. The coup d'état was crushed by the regular army and police forces. The coup attempt lacked broad popular support, was denounced by the [Ethiopian Orthodox Church](#), and was unpopular with the army, [air force](#) and police. Nonetheless, the effort to depose the emperor had support among students and the educated classes. The coup attempt has been characterized as a pivotal moment in Ethiopian history, the point at which Ethiopians "for the first time questioned the power of the king to rule without the people's consent". Student populations began to empathize with the peasantry and poor, and to advocate on their behalf. The coup spurred Haile Selassie to accelerate reform, which was manifested in the form of land grants to military and police officials.

The emperor continued to be a staunch ally of the West, while pursuing a firm policy of [decolonization](#) in Africa, which was still largely under European colonial rule. The United Nations conducted a lengthy inquiry regarding the status of Eritrea, with the superpowers each vying for a stake in the state's future. Britain, the administrator at the time, suggested the partition of Eritrea between Sudan and Ethiopia, separating Christians and Muslims. A UN plebiscite voted 46 to 10 to have Eritrea be [federated](#) with Ethiopia, which was later stipulated on 2 December 1950 in resolution 390 (V). Eritrea would have its own parliament and administration and would be represented in what had been the Ethiopian parliament and would become the federal parliament. However, [Haile Selassie](#) would have none of European attempts to draft a separate Constitution under

which Eritrea would be governed, and wanted his own 1955 Constitution to apply in both Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1961, tensions between independence-minded Eritreans and Ethiopian forces culminated in the [Eritrean War of Independence](#). The emperor declared Eritrea the fourteenth province of Ethiopia in 1962.

In 1963, [Haile Selassie](#) presided over the formation of the [Organisation of African Unity](#) (OAU), the precursor of the continent-wide [African Union](#) (AU). The new organization would establish its headquarters in [Addis Ababa](#). In May of that year, Haile Selassie was elected as the OAU's first official chairperson, a rotating seat. Along with [Modibo Keita](#) of Mali, the Ethiopian leader would later help successfully negotiate the Bamako Accords, which brought an end to the border conflict between [Morocco](#) and [Algeria](#). In 1964, Haile Selassie would initiate the concept of the [United States of Africa](#), a proposition later taken up by [Muammar Gaddafi](#).

Student unrest became a regular feature of Ethiopian life in the 1960s and 1970s. [Marxism](#) took root in large segments of the Ethiopian intelligentsia, particularly among those who had studied abroad and had thus been exposed to radical and left-wing sentiments that were becoming popular in other parts of the globe. Resistance by conservative elements at the Imperial Court and Parliament, and by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, made Haile Selassie's land reform proposals difficult to implement, and also damaged the standing of the government, costing Haile Selassie much of the goodwill he had once enjoyed. This bred resentment among the peasant population. Efforts to weaken unions also hurt his image. As these issues began to pile up, Haile Selassie left much of domestic governance to his Prime Minister, [Aklilu Habte Wold](#), and concentrated more on foreign affairs.

Fall of monarchy

The government's failure to adequately respond to the 1973 Wollo famine, the growing discontent of urban interest groups, and high fuel prices due to the [1973 oil crisis](#) led to a revolt in February 1974 by the army and civilian populace. In June, a group of military officers formed the [Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Territorial Army](#) also known as the Derg to maintain law and order due to the powerlessness of the civilian government following the widespread [mutiny](#).

In July, Emperor Haile Selassie gave the Derg key concessions to arrest military and government officials at every level. Soon both former Prime Ministers [Tsehai Taezaz](#) [Aklilu Habte-Wold](#) and [Endelkachew Makonnen](#), along with most of their cabinets, most regional governors, many senior military officers and officials of the Imperial court were imprisoned. In August, after a proposed constitution creating a constitutional monarchy was presented to the Emperor, the Derg began a program of dismantling the imperial government to forestall further developments in that direction. The Derg [deposed](#) and imprisoned the Emperor on 12 September 1974 and chose Lieutenant General [Aman Andom](#), a popular military leader and a [Sandhurst](#) graduate, to be acting head of state. This was pending the return of Crown Prince [Asfaw Wossen](#) from medical treatment in Europe when he would assume the throne as a constitutional monarch. However, General Aman Andom quarrelled with the radical elements in the Derg over the issue of a new military offensive in [Eritrea](#) and their proposal to execute the high officials of Selassie's former government. After eliminating units loyal to him: the Engineers, the [Imperial Bodyguard](#) and the [Air Force](#), the Derg removed General Aman from power and executed him on 23 November 1974, along with some of his supporters and 60 officials of the previous Imperial government.

Brigadier General [Tafari Benti](#) became the new chairman of the Derg and the head of state. The monarchy was formally abolished in March 1975, and [Marxism-Leninism](#) was proclaimed the new ideology of the state. Emperor Haile Selassie died under mysterious

circumstances on 27 August 1975 while his personal physician was absent. It is commonly believed that [Mengistu Haile Mariam](#) killed him, either by ordering it done or by his own hand although the former is more likely.



Non-contemporary portrait painting of Emperor Yekuno Amlak from the 17th century



The Ethiopian Empire under Emperor Amda Seyon I



Painting of Emperor Zara Yaqob at his coronation



Emperor Dawit II (Lebna Dengel)



The Fasil Ghebbi in Gondar

Army of the Ethiopian Empire

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Army_of_the_Ethiopian_Empire

Army of the Ethiopian Empire



Ethiopian reenactors pictured at [St. George's Cathedral](#) in [Addis Ababa](#) ahead of the 123rd anniversary of the [Battle of Adwa](#)

Founded 19th century

Disbanded 1974

[Leadership](#)

Commander-in-Chief [Emperor of Ethiopia](#)

Minister of Defense [Abiye Abebe](#) (last)

Chief of the General Staff [Aman Andom](#) (last)

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The **Army of the Ethiopian Empire** was the principal land warfare force of the Ethiopian Empire and had naval and air force branches in the 20th century. The organization existed in multiple forms throughout the history of the Ethiopian Empire from its foundation in 1270 by Emperor [Yekuno Amlak](#), to the overthrow of the monarchy and Emperor [Haile Selassie](#) in 1974 by members of the Ethiopian army. Due to the country's position along multiple trade routes and its maintenance of

independence against multiple Islamic and colonialist invasions lead to multiple conflicts against numerous major countries including the Ottomans, Egyptians, British, and Italians.

European contact with the Ethiopians in the 1500s brought the first firearms to the country although attempts to arm the imperial army with gunpowder weapons did not happen until the early 1800s. The Ethiopians attempted to develop modern weapons internally, but after a British expedition to the country resulted in the death of an emperor and an Ethiopian defeat, the empire increased its importation of weaponry. The method of raising a national army was also altered in the 1800s with a centralized permanent field army being established.

Unlike the majority of non-European armies, the Ethiopian army was able to successfully modernize in the late 19th century and saved the country from European colonialism until another Italian invasion in the 1930s. After regaining independence in 1941, the military saw massive modernization programs under the guidance of the British and Americans and served minor roles in international conflicts until internal conflicts diverted Ethiopia's foreign policy.

Historical overview

Pre-modernization

In 1306, diplomatic envoys from Ethiopia arrived in Rome seeking diplomatic relations. In 1488, Bartolomeu Dias completed the first circumvention of the African continent reaching India and opening relations between the Portuguese and multiple African countries, including Ethiopia. In 1488, Ethiopian diplomats arrived in Lisbon, Portugal and Jesuit missionaries came to Ethiopia where they remained until their expulsion by Emperor Fasilides in 1632. Emperor Yeshaq I, according to the Islamic historian al-Maqrizi, hired a group of Mamluks led by al-Tabingha to train his army in gunnery and sword fighting. This is the earliest reference to firearms (Arabic *naft*) in Ethiopia

On 9 April 1520, a Portuguese embassy led by Ambassadors Dom Rodrigo de Lima and Mateus, and included missionary Francisco Alvares, arrived in Massawa to negotiate with Emperor Dawit II over the possibility of an alliance against Muslim countries. On 21 February 1543, the Portuguese aided the Ethiopians defeat the Adal Sultanate at the Battle of Wayna Daga ending the fourteen year Ethiopian–Adal war.

In 1557, the Ottoman Empire invaded Ethiopia and conquered Massawa and other areas along the Red Sea coast. The Ottomans would remain in the area until 1863, when Isma'il Pasha became the Governor of the Egypt Eyalet and declared a Khedivate that was later recognized in 1867. By 1875, Isma'il had expanded his control to Berbera and Harar during the Ethiopian–Egyptian War, but following his deposition by the British and the Ethiopian victory in the war the areas were returned to their control. In 1884, the Bogoss in Eritrea were returned to the Ethiopians through liquidations of Egypt by the British and Harar was conquered by Menelik II in 1886.

In 1887, the Sudanese Mahdist State invaded the Gojjam and Begemder provinces as a part of the Mahdist War. From 9 to 10 March 1889, Emperor Yohannes IV met the Mahdists at the Battle of Gallabat where the Mahdists were defeated, but Yohannes IV was fatally wounded and died on 10 March. Due to the instability of the region from the Mahdist invasions the Ethiopians were unable to do anything to prevent the Italian colonization of Eritrea which took access to the Red Sea away from them.

The first [firearms](#) arrived in Ethiopia during [Yeshaq I](#)'s reign, but were not put to use. In the 1520s [Dawit II](#) purchased a small amount of Portuguese and Turkish firearms but large scale usage of them by both lay folk and nobility would not come until after the founding of [Gonder](#). In 1828, Ras Sabagardis, the chief of the [Tigray Province](#), sent his English servant to [Bombay](#), Egypt, and England with requests for firearms and one hundred light cavalry. In India the servant found a surplus of outdated [matchlocks](#) belonging to the [East India Company](#) and Foreign Secretary [Henry John Temple](#) and the directors of the East India Company approved the transfer of 3,000 matchlocks in 1831. In 1839, [Sahle Selassie](#), the King of Shewa, imported several cannons and was later given a mill to manufacture gunpowder by the French in 1840.

British Expedition



The [Sebastopol](#) mortar was an early attempt at creating modern weaponry inside Ethiopia

In 1855, [Tewodros II](#) became the emperor and had the goal of unifying the Ethiopians into a centralized state in order to establish the country as a regional power. In 1856, he defeated Negus [Haile Melekot](#), who ruled over the semi-autonomous [Shewa region](#), and started military campaigns against the [Oromo](#). During the 1860s, he used European missionaries to work in road construction and on building a siege weapon.

Tewodros II also centralized the military by creating a permanent standing army from its historical practice of temporarily raising regional armies to create a national army. He also created a military hierarchy with titles going upward from commanders of ten, fifty, one thousand, and larger amounts of soldiers. Tewodros II also created an arsenal of modern weaponry in [Magdala](#) with 11,063 rifles, 875 pistols, 481 bayonets, 83,563 bullets, 15 cannons, 7 mortars, and 55 cannon shells. The [Sebastopol](#), a massive mortar created at the Gafat foundry, was a prized weapon, but when it was used against the British it misfired and was unable to be used.

In 1864, Tewodros II imprisoned British consul [Charles Duncan Cameron](#) and multiple missionaries and ignored British ultimatums sent ordering his release. The British sent [an army](#), equipped with modern military supplies and artillery, under the leadership of [Robert Napier](#) to free Cameron. On 10 April 1868, Ethiopian infantry armed with rifles and spears met the British at the [Battle of Magdala](#) and were easily defeated. Tewodros II later committed suicide after negotiations with the British had failed, but the British left after freeing Cameron and the missionaries having no intention of conquering Ethiopia.

Modernization



Depiction of the Battle of Adwa

First Italo-Ethiopian War

During the latter half of the 19th century the size of the Ethiopian field army rose dramatically. The largest army raised by Tewodros II during his reign was 15,000. In 1873, Emperor [Yohannes IV](#) raised an army of 32,000 soldiers, by 1876, he raised an army of 64,000 soldiers, and by 1880, he raised an army of 140,000 soldiers with 40,000 armed with rifles. While serving as the King of Shewa, [Menelik II](#) raised 80,000 soldiers in 1878, although only 4,000 had rifles, but by the time of the first war with the Italians he raised an army of 150,000 soldiers with the majority being equipped with modern weapons.

In 1879, [Alfred Ilg](#) arrived in the court of Menelik, seeking employment similar to [Werner Munzinger](#) who had helped [Khedive Isma'il Pasha](#) with the modernization of the [Khedivate of Egypt](#), and aided in the modernization of Ethiopia's infrastructure and military. In 1887, the Ethiopian army was estimated to consist of over 145,000 soldiers with 88,000 infantry and 57,000 cavalry. The soldiers were armed with 71,000 firearms and 28,000 [breechloaders](#).

On 3 June 1884, the [Hewett Treaty](#) was signed between Britain, Egypt and Ethiopia that allowed the Ethiopians to occupy parts of Eritrea and allowed the Ethiopian goods to pass in and out of [Massawa](#) duty-free. From the British viewpoint, it was highly undesirable for the French to replace the Egyptians in Eritrea as that would increase the amount of French naval bases on the Red Sea that could interfere with British shipping heading through the Suez Canal, but the British did not want the financial burden of ruling Eritrea so they looked for another country to replace the Egyptians. The Hewett treaty seemed to suggest that the land in Eritrea would be given to the Ethiopians as the Egyptians pulled out. After initially encouraging the Emperor Yohannes IV to move into Eritrea to replace the Egyptians, London decided to have the Italians move into Eritrea. In his history of Ethiopia, Augustus Wylde wrote: "England made use of King John Emperor Yohannes as long as he was of any service and then threw him over to the tender mercies of Italy...It is one of our worst bits of business out of the many we have been guilty of in Africa...one of the vilest bites of treachery".

In 1885, the Italians took over Massawa and [Beilul](#) and despite protests made by Menelik to [Queen Victoria](#) the Italians remained in the area. On 20 October 1887, the Italians and Ethiopians signed a treaty of friendship and alliance where both nations declared themselves allies, and the Italians promised to give weapons to the Ethiopians and to not annex more of their territory. The [Treaty of Wuchale](#) was signed on 2 May 1889, and another convention was held on 1 October 1889. The Treaty of Wuchale further expanded diplomatic relations between the countries, but despite the Italians recognizing Menelik as the Emperor of Ethiopia in the treaty the Foreign Affairs ministry sent telegrams to thirteen other countries describing Ethiopia as an Italian protectorate on 11 October

1889. The Ethiopians criticized the Italians as the Amharic and Italian versions of the treaty were not proper translations.

The [Kingdom of Italy](#) attempted to enforce their version of treaty onto the Ethiopians during the [First Italo-Ethiopian War](#), but were defeated due to military support given by the Russian and French through modern weaponry and supplies. In 1895, [Nikolay Leontiev](#) organized the delivery of 5,000,000 cartridges, 30,000 rifles, 5,000 sabers, and a few cannons from the Russians to the Ethiopian army. Leontiev later served as a military adviser at the [Battle of Adwa](#) and later organized the first modernized army battalion of the Ethiopian army in February 1899.

Pre-World War I

In 1883, the French arrived in modern-day Djibouti and established a [protectorate](#) although the border between the French colony and Ethiopia would not be formalized until 1897.

On 13 December 1906, the British, French, and Italians signed a [Tripartite Treaty](#) regarding economic activities in Ethiopia and also regulated the sale of weapons to the Ethiopians, which had before lacked any, with patrols in the Red Sea to enforce the weapon regulations. In 1920, the French attempted to have the weapons embargo lifted, but the Italians and British refused although the French would smuggle outdated weaponry through [French Somaliland](#).

In 1911, around 60,000 stands of arms and 6,000,000 cartridges taken by the Japanese from [Port Arthur](#) during the [Russo-Japanese War](#) were sold to Ethiopia.

In 1905, the Ethiopians signed a weapons treaty with the [German Empire](#) and [Austria-Hungary](#). On July 27, 1914, the Ethiopians and Austro-Hungarians made an agreement and paid for the transfer of 120 cannons from the Austrians to Ethiopians. However, the following day the Austro-Hungarians declared war on [Serbia](#) starting World War I and preventing the full transfer of the cannons.

World War I

During [World War I](#) the Ethiopian Empire remained neutral, but made attempts to side with the [Entente Powers](#) which were stopped by the Italians. Kaiser [Wilhelm II](#) attempted to convince the Ethiopians to join the [Central Powers](#). [Leo Frobenius](#) and Salomon Hall were sent in attempts to enter Ethiopia, but were arrested in Italian Eritrea. Frederick Wilhelm von Syburg, the German ambassador to Ethiopia, attempted to convince the Ethiopians into joining the war through promises of access to the Red Sea, but was unsuccessful.

In 1915, Enderase [Haile Selassie](#) offered to give the Entente Powers 200,000 soldiers to aid in the defense of [Egypt](#) or to participate in the [Middle Eastern theatre](#) against the [Ottoman Empire](#). At the time the Ethiopian army was in possession of 800,000–1,000,000 rifles produced in Germany and Belgium after 1911. In 1918, French Prime Minister [Georges Clemenceau](#) asked Italian Prime Minister [Vittorio Emanuele Orlando](#) on Selassie's behalf over the acceptance of 2,000 Ethiopian soldiers to fight in the war, but Orlando rejected the offer. Following the [Russian Revolution](#) and collapse of the [Russian Empire](#), former [Imperial Russian Army](#) officers came to Ethiopia to train the Ethiopians.

Interwar Period

In 1917, Selassie established the Machine Gun Guards under the leadership of Gäbrä Yohannes Woldä Mädhən, who had served in the British army in Kenya as a [NCO](#). In

1919, veterans of the [East African campaign](#) from World War I were assigned to serve in the unit. In 1924, the unit was issued grand uniforms after Selassie's tour throughout Europe and the unit was reorganized as the [Imperial Bodyguard](#) in 1928, with 5,000 guards.

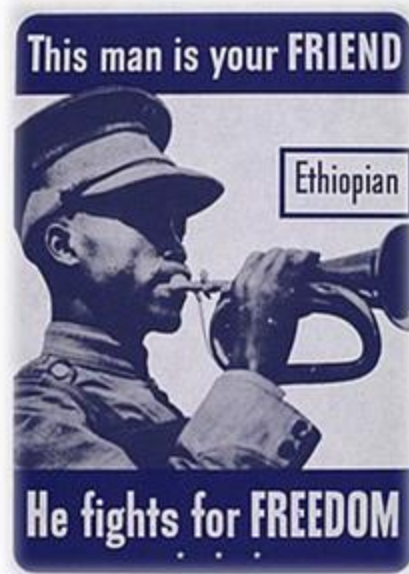
During the 1920s Selassie sent military officers to be trained by the French at [Saint-Cyr](#) and had the members of his imperial bodyguard trained by Belgian military officers. During the [Interwar period](#) the majority of the world started disarmament projects, but Ethiopia did not and at one point held the fourth largest army in the world with over 500,000 soldiers behind the [Soviet Union](#), [China](#), and [France](#).

In November 1922, Haile Selassie watched an air show of the British [Royal Air Force](#) in the [Aden Province](#). After watching the show Selassie made attempts to create an air force and on 18 August 1929, a [Potez 25-A2](#) was delivered to Addis Ababa and a [Junkers W 33c](#) was delivered on 5 September.

In 1928, around 2,000 unemployed German and Austrian men traveled to Ethiopia under the leadership of Herr Wodosch with the promise of receiving three acres of land and a cow after joining the Ethiopian army.

In 1931, Emperor Selassie asked the Japanese to accept an [ambassador extraordinary](#) delegation to be sent to Japan. The delegation, consisting of Teferi Gebre Mariam, Araya Abeba, and Daba Birrou, left Addis Ababa on September 30, 1931, with a Japanese diplomat and left Djibouti on October 5, to sail to Japan. The delegation toured Japan to inspect the [Japanese Army](#) and to learn how Ethiopia could modernize its country in a way [similar to the Japanese](#). The Ethiopian delegation left Japan on December 28, and arrived in Addis Ababa on January 29, 1932.

Second Italo-Ethiopian War



American propaganda poster during [World War II](#)

On 5 December 1934, a [border skirmish](#) between the Ethiopians and Italians occurred at [Welwel](#) where 107 Ethiopians and 21 Italians were killed. The Ethiopians asked for the United States to apply the [Kellogg–Briand Pact](#) against the Italians, but they refused.

The Ethiopian army was in possession of outdated infantry weapons, 10–11 million rifle cartridges, four tanks, and thirteen planes against the more numerous and technologically advanced [Italian Army](#) and [air force](#). The army consisted of 40,000

regular soldiers and 500,000 irregular soldiers all with poor equipment with the nucleus of the army being the 7,000 royal guardsmen trained by Belgian officials. The weapons regulations and embargo that had been applied to Ethiopia since 1906 had hurt the Ethiopians with their army lacking munitions and supplies. Orders were placed for aircraft from [Czechoslovakia](#), [Switzerland](#), and [Germany](#), but were not delivered before the war started.

Shortly before the war started military officials from Belgium and Sweden came to aid in the training of the Ethiopian army. Swedish Major General [Eric Virgin](#) helped to train Ethiopian infantry and artillery until he was sent back to Sweden on 1 October 1935, two days before the Italian invasion. In January 1935, a modern military school in [Holeta Genet](#) was created with the assistance of the Swedish with the intention of training military officers in modern military techniques over a span of sixteen month classes, but the first class was unable to graduate before the Italian invasion. Nazi Germany gave material support to the Ethiopians with 16,000 rifles, 600 machine guns, 3 airplanes, and 10 million rounds of ammunition as Führer [Adolf Hitler](#) wanted the Italians to be weakened before he attempted the [Anschluss](#) with the [Federal State of Austria](#).

Fifty foreign mercenaries joined the Ethiopian forces, including Trinidadian pilot [Hubert Julian](#), an official Swedish military mission under Captain [Viking Tamm](#), the White Russian Feodor Konovalov and the Czechoslovak writer Adolf Parlesak. Several Austrian Nazis, a team of Belgian Fascists and Cuban mercenary Alejandro del Valle also fought for Haile Selassie. Many of these officers and volunteers were military advisers, pilots, doctors or supporters of the Ethiopian cause. Fifty mercenaries fought in the Ethiopian army and another fifty people were active in the Ethiopian Red Cross or non-military activities. The Italians later attributed most of the relative success achieved by the Ethiopians to foreigners or *ferenghi* and the Italian propaganda machine magnified the number to thousands, to explain away the Ethiopian [Christmas Offensive](#) of late 1935.

On 3 October 1935, 100,000 soldiers of the Italian Army commanded by Marshal [Emilio De Bono](#) attacked from [Eritrea](#) without prior declaration of war. The Italians used [chemical weapons](#), in violation of the 1925 [Geneva Protocol](#), effectively against the Ethiopian army, whose uniform consisted of light desert clothing and mostly barefoot soldiers. Chemical weapons were used in multiple battles and against thirteen towns from 22 December 1935 to 7 April 1936. In 1936, Addis Ababa was taken by the Italians and the last battle between the Italians and Ethiopians occurred on 19 February 1937. Shortly before the fall of Addis Ababa to the Italians Haile Selassie had fled from Ethiopia on board the British light cruiser [HMS Enterprise \(D52\)](#).

In a memorandum submitted to the [Paris Peace Conference](#) in 1946, the Ethiopian government stated that 275,000 soldiers had been killed in action, 78,500 were killed in hostilities during the occupation from 1936 to 1941, 17,800 women and children killed by the Italian bombings, 30,000 were killed in the [reprisal massacre](#) in Addis Ababa in mid-February 1937, 35,000 died in concentration camps, 24,000 people were killed in obedience to orders from summary courts, 30,000 people died after their villages had been destroyed, for a grand total of 760,300 civilian and military deaths as a result of the war and ensuing Italian occupation.

In addition to the Italian war crimes in violation of the Geneva Protocol and civilian massacres the Ethiopians engaged in war crimes. Some captured Italian soldiers and Eritrean Ascari were castrated as per Ethiopian military tradition. The Ethiopian army also utilized [expanding bullets](#) which had been prohibited by the 1899 [Hague Convention](#).

Post–World War II

On 20 January 1941, Selassie entered [Gojjam](#) returning to Ethiopia after five years in exile. On 5 May 1941, Selassie entered Addis Ababa, and the remaining Italian soldiers in the country surrendered by January 1942.

Following the [liberation of Ethiopia](#) in 1941, Selassie started a campaign to transform the country into a more centralized monarchical state and modernization of the country's military with the ancient military hierarchy being abolished. In 1942, a military treaty was signed between Ethiopia and Britain where the British would provide military missions to assist in training and organizing an Ethiopian army that would be effective at restoring order and for the British to exercise control over the country's main cities and police the capital. Selassie also organized a Territorial Army that would serve to defeat the guerrilla organizations throughout the country, but the army never advanced past policing local areas.

The [British Military Mission to Ethiopia](#) (BMME) under the leadership of General [Stephen Butler](#) aided in the training and rearmament of the Ethiopians. By 1942, the reorganized Ethiopian army was in possession of 250 horses, 2,100 mules, two artillery batteries, an armored car regiment of 205 soldiers, and 148 officers were trained in methods similar to those at the Royal Military College. By 1958, the army was in possession of rifles from the British, Czechoslovak, Italians, and Americans, 500 [carbines](#), 590 machine guns, 432 mortars, 20 old Czechoslovak light tanks and 5 [M24 Chaffees](#), 28 armored cars, 90 field artillery, 12 old antitank weapons, and 120 heavy mortars. The Imperial Bodyguard had 3,100 soldiers spread across seven battalions by 1946, and would continue to be the main focus of the Ethiopian army until an attempt coup by the organization against Selassie in 1960.

After the Italian armies were defeated in [North](#) and [East Africa](#) the British started selling the captured Italian weapons to the Ethiopians, but at high prices resulting in the army limiting its purchases to small arms. In 1944, the Ethiopians rejected arm sales from the British due to price gouging and started buying military supplies from the Americans although the United States could only sell a fraction of the requested supplies. In 1947, the sale of 10,000 outdated rifles was easily approved by the British [War Office](#) due to their being over 290,000 tons of them being stored in [Egypt](#). After the Ethiopian-American Mutual Defense Agreement was signed in 1953 the United States sent \$3,800,000 worth of small arms, field artillery, and military vehicles to Ethiopia.

The budget for defense and internal security was expanded by forty percent. The air force was trained by Swedish officers, a small coastal navy was organized under the supervision of Norwegian naval officers, Israeli advisers trained paratroopers, Indian officers staffed a military school in Harer, and officers in the Ethiopian army were sent to attend schools in the United States, Britain, and [Yugoslavia](#).

From 1953 to 1970, the United States gave Ethiopia \$147 million in military aid and was the main receipt of all American military aid to Africa. In 1960, the United States made a secret agreement with Ethiopian to help train and equip an army of 40,000 soldiers to fight against the [Somali Republic](#) and rebels in [Eritrea](#). The United States was given the [Kagnew Station](#) in 1953, where over 3,000 Americans were later sent to staff the naval communications and satellite systems base there. An investigation by the United States Senate in 1970 uncovered the military agreements between Ethiopia and the United States. However, by 1973, the Ethiopians were no longer prioritized by the United States, which decreased its military aid and presence at military bases throughout the country.

On 13 December 1960, the Imperial Bodyguard attempted a coup d'état while Selassie was outside of the country. Prince [Amha Selassie](#) and twenty cabinet ministers were captured by the coup members, but the main army remained loyal to the emperor. When Selassie returned to Addis Ababa on 17 December, the army defeated the coup.

Following the 1960 coup by the Imperial Bodyguard and the threat of an independent Somalia the army was enlarged to over 28,000 soldiers by 1962, and over 30,000 the next year. In 1966, the army had been expanded to over 38,000 soldiers and a five-year plan was started in 1968 to further expand the army to over 46,000 soldiers.

Military activity (1950–1974)



Ethiopian soldiers in the [Kagnew Battalion](#) during the [Korean War](#)

In 1941, the British occupied [Italian East Africa](#) and placed Eritrea under [British Military Administration](#). In 1947, the [treaty](#) officially declaring peace between Italy and the [Allies](#) was ratified. It included a clause stating that if the Allies were unable to find a solution on what to do with the former Italian colonies within a year, the matter would be brought to the [United Nations General Assembly](#). On 15 September 1948, the Allies brought the fate of Italy's three colonies in Somalia, Libya, and Eritrea to the General Assembly and on 21 November 1949, it was decided that Eritrea would be given to Ethiopia. On 15 September 1952, the United Nations voted forty six to ten, with four abstaining, in favor of a [federation](#) between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1955, the Imperial Ethiopian Navy was formed as the country now had access to the Red Sea via Eritrea.

On 25 June 1950, [North Korea](#) invaded [South Korea](#) starting the [Korean War](#). In 1951, three battalions of Ethiopian soldiers were sent, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonels Täshomä Ergtäu, Asfaw Andargé and Woldä Yohannes Sheta, to aid the South Koreans. Following the [armistice](#) two more battalions were sent. In 1960, four battalions were sent to join the [United Nations](#) forces during the [Congo Crisis](#), but they saw no action.

On May 22, 1953, a U.S.-Ethiopian Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement was signed. A U.S. [Military Assistance Advisory Group](#) was dispatched to Ethiopia and began its work by reorganizing the army into three divisions. On 25 September 1953, Selassie created the Imperial Ministry of National Defense that unified the Army, Air Force, and Navy. By 1956, the First Division had its headquarters at [Addis Ababa](#) (First, Second, Third Brigades, 5,300 strong); the Second Division was headquartered at [Asmara](#), with the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Twelfth Brigades (4,500 strong); and Third Division [Harar](#) (ዞንዳ ድርጅት, with the Fourth, Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Brigades, 6,890 strong) respectively.

The three divisions had a total of 16,832 troops. In May 1959, the Emperor established the Imperial Territorial Army as a reserve force that provided military training to civil servants.

In 1960 the U.S. Army Area Handbook for Ethiopia described the very personalized command arrangements then used by the Emperor.

The Emperor is by constitutional provision Commander-in-Chief, and to him are reserved all rights respecting the size of the forces and their organization and command, together with the power to appoint, promote, transfer and dismiss military officers. He seeks the advice and consent of Parliament in declaring war. Traditionally, he assumes personal command of the forces in time of war.'

Ethiopia's participation in peacekeeping efforts ended in the 1960s, as the army had to focus on the [Eritrean revolts](#) and [Somali border](#) skirmishes.

Derg

In February 1974, the military overthrew the government of Prime Minister [Aklilu Habte-Wold](#). In April, the army arrested twenty five officials on corruption charges and attempted to detain fifty other officials. On 21 June 1974, the [Derg](#), a committee of low-ranking military officers and enlisted men, was formed. On 28 June, the Derg seized the radio station in [Addis Ababa](#) and the Ethiopian Army arrested more officials who had been members of the previous government for attempting to prevent reform attempts by Prime Minister [Endelkachew Makonnen](#). The leadership of the military stated that they had no plans to overthrow either Emperor Selassie or Prime Minister Makonnen. However, on 22 July, Makonnen was arrested by the orders of the military.

On September 12, 1974, the Derg deposed Emperor [Haile Selassie](#), ending the monarchy which had been established in 1270. The army of the [Ethiopian Empire](#) was reorganized into the army of the [Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia](#) and later into that of the [People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia](#). Following the collapse of the communist dictatorship, the military was reorganized again into the [Ethiopian National Defense Force](#); the navy was eventually disbanded in 1996.

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Crown Council of Ethiopia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crown_Council_of_Ethiopia

Crown Council of Ethiopia




Royal Coat of Arms

Abbreviation Crown Council

Founded at  [Ethiopian Empire](#)

Type [Community organization](#)
[Cultural center](#)

Legal status	Constitutional Body Former Government-in-exile of Ethiopia and Eritrea
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  United States of America Alexandria, Virginia
Region	 Ethiopia - Ethiopian Community and Diaspora  Eritrea - Eritrean Community and Diaspora  Habesha Community
Emperor	Zera Yacob Amha Selassie
President	Prince Ermias Sahle Selassie

The **Crown Council of Ethiopia** is a [community organization](#) and [cultural center](#) with the mission of preserving the culture(s) of the former [Ethiopian Empire](#), as well as promoting development and humanitarian efforts. Today, the Crown Council has abandoned its former mission of being a [Government-in-exile](#), redefining its role as a [humanitarian](#) and [cultural preservation](#) organization representing [Ethiopians](#), [Eritreans](#), and their [diaspora](#). It is headquartered in the [Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area](#) in the [United States](#), where a large concentration of [Ethiopian Americans](#) and [Eritrean Americans](#) are located.

It originated as a [constitutional body](#) within the [Ethiopian Empire](#), which were appointed by and advised the reigning [Emperor of Ethiopia](#) ([Ge'ez](#): ንጉሠ ነገሥት, *Nəgusä Nəgäst*); on occasion, its members acted on behalf of the Crown. After the deposition of the monarchy, the Crown Council of Ethiopia acted as the [Government-in-exile](#) of the [Ethiopian Empire](#) once claiming to be the legitimate government of [Ethiopia](#) and [Eritrea](#). On 28 July 2004, the Crown Council abandoned its Government-in-exile status, relinquishing its claim of legitimate governance to the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The Communist [Derg](#) deposed the last Emperor, [Haile Selassie I](#) on 12 September 1974, and dissolved the council. Most members of the council were imprisoned and executed, including its president, Prince [Asrate Medhin Kassa](#). The Derg announced that the monarchy had been abolished early in the following year. However, in 1993, a new Crown Council — which included several descendants of the late Haile Selassie I — asserted that the title of Emperor of Ethiopia was still in existence, and the Crown Council would act in its interests. Its justification was that the abolition of the monarchy by the Derg was extra-constitutional and carried out illegally.

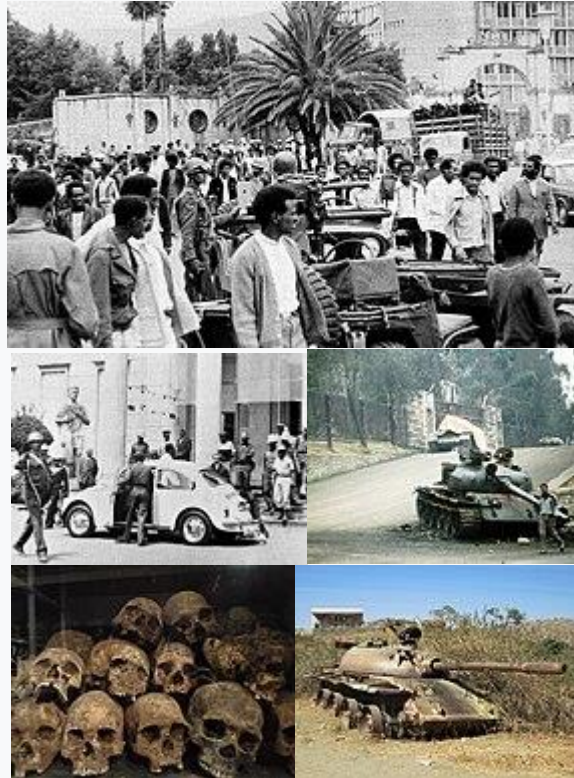
The Federal [Constitution of 1995](#) confirmed the status of the country as a republic, but Ethiopian royalists continue to operate the Crown Council. The Ethiopian government has however continued to accord members of the Imperial family their princely titles as a matter of courtesy. On 16 March 2005, Prince [Ermias Sahle Selassie](#) was reaffirmed by his second cousin [Prince Zera Yacob](#) as the President of the Crown Council of Ethiopia. Prince Zera Yacob is considered to be the [Crown Prince](#) of Ethiopia.^[1] On July 28, 2004, the Crown Council redefined its role by redirecting its mission from the political realm to a mission of cultural preservation, development and humanitarian efforts in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Civil War

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_Civil_War

Ethiopian Civil War

Part of the [Eritrean War of Independence](#), the [Ethiopian–Somali conflict](#), the [Oromo conflict](#), the [Cold War](#), and the [Revolutions of 1989](#)



Clockwise from top:

Public demonstration amid the [Ethiopian Revolution](#); [T-62](#) tank destroyed shortly after the [fall of the Derg](#); Abandoned [T-55](#) tank in northern [Eritrea](#); [Red Terror](#) victims' skull remains at "[Red Terror](#)" [Martyrs' Memorial Museum](#) in [Addis Ababa](#); [Haile Selassie](#) being deposited in the [1974 coup d'état](#)

Date	12 September 1974 – 28 May 1991 (16 years, 8 months, 3 weeks and 2 days)
Location	Ethiopia
Result	EPLF/TPLF rebel victory <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fall of the Ethiopian Empire and subsequent implementation of military ruleCreation, then collapse, of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia by the Derg

- Installation of the [TPLF](#)-led [transitional government](#) which would later become the [EPRDF](#) government in Ethiopia
- Installation of the [EPLF](#)-established [PFDJ](#) government in Eritrea after independence from Ethiopia

Territorial changes Independence of Eritrea; Ethiopia becomes a [landlocked country](#).

Belligerents

[EPRDF](#)

-  [TPLF](#)
-  [EPDM](#)
-  [OPDO](#)



[EPRP](#)



[MEISON](#) (from 1977)



[EDU](#)



[OLF](#)



[WSLF](#)





[ALF](#)



[ONLF](#)^[1]

[Eritrean separatists:](#)

-  [ELF](#) (until 1981)
-  [EPLF](#)



[Derg](#) (1974–1987)



[PDR](#) [Ethiopia](#)

Supported by:



[Soviet](#)



[Union](#)^{[2][3][4]} (1974–



1990)



[Cuba](#) (1974–1990)



[South](#)



[Yemen](#) (1974–1990)



[Israel](#)^[5] (from



1990)

Commanders and leaders



[Meles](#) [Zenawi](#)



[Tsadkan](#) [Gebretensae](#)



[Isaias](#) [Afwerki](#)



[Elemo Qiltu](#) †



[Mengistu](#) [Haile](#)



[Mariam](#)



[Tesfaye](#) [Gebre](#)



[Kidan](#)



[Fisseha](#) [Desta](#)

Strength



141,000 (1991)



110,000 (1990)^[6]



13,000 (1991)^[7]



230,000 (1991)

Casualties and losses

[Casualties and impact of the Ethiopian Civil War](#)

≈400,000–579,000

killed^{[8][9][10]}

≈1,200,000 [deaths from famine](#)^{[8][9][11]}

The **Ethiopian Civil War** was a [civil war](#) in [Ethiopia](#) and present-day [Eritrea](#), fought between the Ethiopian [military junta](#) known as the [Derg](#) and Ethiopian-Eritrean anti-government rebels from 12 September 1974 to 28 May 1991.

The [Derg](#) overthrew the [Ethiopian Empire](#) and Emperor [Haile Selassie](#) in a [coup d'état](#) on 12 September 1974, establishing Ethiopia as a [Marxist–Leninist state](#) under a military junta and [provisional government](#). Various opposition groups of ideological affiliations ranging from [Communist](#) to anti-Communist, often drawn from a specific ethnic background, began armed resistance to the [Soviet](#)-backed Derg, in addition to the [Eritrean separatists](#) already fighting in the [Eritrean War of Independence](#). The Derg used military campaigns and the [Qey Shibir](#) (Ethiopian Red Terror) to repress the rebels. By the mid-1980s, various issues such as the [1983–1985 famine](#), economic decline, and other after-effects of Derg policies ravaged Ethiopia, increasing popular support for the rebels. The Derg dissolved itself in 1987, establishing the [People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia](#) (PDRE) under the [Workers' Party of Ethiopia](#) (WPE) in an attempt to maintain its rule.^[12] The Soviet Union began ending its support for the PDRE in the late-1980s and the government was overwhelmed by the increasingly victorious rebel groups. In May 1991, the PDRE was defeated in [Eritrea](#) and President [Mengistu Haile Mariam](#) fled the country. The Ethiopian Civil War ended on 28 May 1991 when the [Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front](#) (EPRDF), a coalition of left-wing ethnic rebel groups, [entered the capital Addis Ababa](#). The PDRE was dissolved and replaced with the [Tigray People's Liberation Front](#)-led [Transitional Government of Ethiopia](#).^[13]

The Ethiopian Civil War left at least 1.4 million people dead, with 1 million of the deaths being related to [famine](#) and the remainder from [combat](#) and other violence.^[12]

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Ethiopian Revolution

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_Revolution

Ethiopian Revolution

Part of [Opposition to Haile Selassie](#)



Clockwise from top: The Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces ([Derg](#)); the [1974 coup d'état](#) of [Haile Selassie](#); Public demonstration on 24 August 1974

Date	12 January – 12 September 1974 (8 months)
Location	Ethiopian Empire
Caused by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontent with the imperial government of Haile Selassie • 1973–1975 Wollo famine • 1973 oil crisis • Inflation
Goals	Human rights, social change, agrarian and land reforms, price controls, free schooling, releasing political prisoners
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutiny • Political demonstrations
Resulted in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haile Selassie deposed by the military on 12 September 1974 • Establishment of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (Derg) • Beginning of the Ethiopian Civil War

The **Ethiopian Revolution** ([Amharic](#): የኢትዮጵያ አብዮት; 12 January – 12 September 1974) was a period of civil, police and military [upheaval](#) in [Ethiopia](#) to protest against the weakened [Haile Selassie](#) government. It is generally thought to have begun on 12 January 1974 when Ethiopian soldiers began a rebellion in [Negele Borana](#), with the protests continuing into February 1974. People from different occupations, starting from junior army officers, students and teachers, and taxi drivers, joined a strike to demand human rights, social change, [agrarian reforms](#), [price controls](#), free schooling, and releasing political prisoners, and labor unions demanded a fixation of wages in accordance with price indexes, as well as pensions for workers, etc.

In June 1974, a group of army officers established the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, later branding itself as the [Derg](#), which struggled to topple Haile Selassie's cabinet under Prime Minister [Endelkachew Makonnen](#). By September of that year, the Derg began detaining Endalkachew's closest advisors, dissolved the Crown Council and Imperial Court and disbanded the emperor's military staff. The Ethiopian Revolution ended with the [12 September coup d'état](#) of Haile Selassie by the Coordinating Committee.

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Together with his wife, Empress Menen Asfaw, 1955



Ras Tafari in 1924 at the International Labour Organization



With King George V at Buckingham Palace, 1924



Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie I on 2 November 1930



On a horse before the war, 1935



The Emperor arrives in Jerusalem, May 1936.



Haile Selassie at the League of Nations appealing Italy's invasion in 1936



Fairfield House, Bath, was Selassie's residence for five years during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War and parts of World War II



Haile Selassie with Brigadier Daniel Sandford (left) and Colonel Wingate (right) in Dambacha Fort, after its capture, 15 April 1941



Queen Elizabeth II with Emperor Haile Selassie heading towards to Buckingham Palace in 1954



Haile Selassie I with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on board the USS *Quincy* (CA-71) in Egypt after the Yalta Conference on 13 February 1945.



Haile Selassie with Nikita Khrushchev, Moscow, 1959

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